

Will the broadcast flag interfere with consumers ability to make copies of DTV content for their personal use, either on personal video recorders or removable media?

I am extremely concerned that the broadcast flag will interfere with my ability to make personal, fair use copying for personal use. For example, there are many legitimate uses for making second generation copies: when going from an obsolete format to a current format, or making a dub of a recording because the recording media is failing. I have legitimate recordings made with a DAT recorder many years ago, and the DRM "copy inhibit" flag is keeping me from making a copy onto a newer, more stable DAT tape. I had to eventually make the copy via analog, and the original tape is now mostly unplayable due to dropouts and tape damage caused by storage.

Would the digital flag interfere with consumers ability to send DTV content across networks, such as home digital networks connecting digital set top boxes, digital recorders, digital servers and digital display devices?

I am certian that the digital flag will interfere with my ability to digitally route content across my home network. As media components in the home become more interconnected, a central media server will connect to all TVs in a house. The thought of needing a separate "recorder" for each TV makes no sense when the home network makes everything accessible from any room. I am very concerned that the broadcast flag will interfere with my ability to do this.

Would the broadcast flag requirement limit consumers ability to use their existing electronic equipment (equipment not built to look for the flag) or make it difficult to use older components with new equipment that is compliant with the broadcast flag standard?

I expect that if the FCC were to support the broadcast flag, that soon there would be legislation introduced that would require all equipment sold to require circuitry honoring this flag. In fact, I expect that if this flag is set, then output from the device via analog ports will be disabled, rendering the use of older equipment impossible.

What will be the cost impact, if any, that a broadcast flag requirement would have on consumer electronics equipment?

This additional hardware and supporting software will make sets more expensive. We saw that demonstrated when DAT audio recorders were brought into the US in the mid 80s.

Other Comments:

Digital rights management and broadcast flags make digital television undesirable to me. Why would I want to spend all that money on a format that is more limiting to what I can do than current broadcast TV is?